

# St George's Church of England Aided Primary School

Kesteven Road, Stamford, PE9 1SX

**Inspection dates** 22–23 October 2014

|                                |                      |                      |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Requires improvement | 3        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b>          | <b>2</b> |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Good                 | 2        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Good                 | 2        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Good                 | 2        |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Good                 | 2        |
| Early years provision          |                      | Good                 | 2        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The skilful leadership of the headteacher, with very effective support from other senior leaders and the governing body, has brought about significant improvements across the school.
- The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection and is now good throughout the school, with some that is outstanding.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is steadily rising and the proportions that make better than expected progress across the school are increasing.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The strong leadership provided by the coordinator ensures that staff have a clear understanding of children's needs. Activities build well on what children know and can do.
- The curriculum offers imaginative learning experiences that engage pupils and challenge them to think deeply. It makes a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teachers assess accurately how well pupils are learning. They are carefully introducing a new system to meet the requirements of the new National Curriculum
- Pupils of all ages are keen to learn. They concentrate well in lessons and their behaviour is good. They say they feel safe and that school is a friendly place.
- Parents are very supportive and say that their children are happy to come to school. This is reflected in above-average levels of attendance.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some pupils, especially the most able, are not always given harder work when they are ready to move on in their learning.
- Teaching assistants are not used consistently well in all classes.

### Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 sessions of teaching, seven of which were observed jointly with a school leader. In addition, inspectors undertook a scrutiny of the work in pupils' books and children's 'learning journeys'.
- Meetings were held with school staff, two governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about the school's work and listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors observed the schools' work and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress, planning and monitoring documentation, the school improvement plan and self-evaluation summary, safeguarding policies, and behaviour and attendance records.
- Inspectors took account of the 22 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, together with the results of the school's own parental questionnaires. They also spoke with a number of parents as they were dropping off their children to school.
- Questionnaire responses were received from 25 staff and these were considered.

### Inspection team

Joan Beale, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Robert Litten

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage through one Reception class, which children attend full time.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than the national average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for additional government funding through the pupil premium is above average at roughly 30% and it is higher in some year groups. This funding is for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action was below average in 2013 at just below 6%, but this varies from year to year. This also applies to the proportion supported through school action plus, an education, health and care plan or a statement, which was 7%
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The consultant headteacher who was leading the school at the time of the last inspection was appointed as headteacher in September 2013. She is a Local Leader of Education and also leads another school.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
  - all pupils, especially the most able, have harder work as soon as they are ready to move on in their learning
  - teaching assistants are used productively during all parts of lessons to support the learning of individuals and groups of pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides strong leadership. Senior leaders and governors share her high aspirations for pupils' achievement and personal development. There has been rapid improvement against the key areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection.
- Well-targeted changes have brought about these improvements. For example, a structured system for the teaching of writing has raised attainment in writing across the school. Improvements to the teaching of early reading skills have led to much higher outcomes in the Year 1 phonics check than are seen nationally.
- Continual improvements to the quality of teaching and learning are central to the school's drive to improve standards further. Good systems are in place to assess the performance of teachers. This helps to ensure that they are held to account for the progress of pupils in their class. The quality of teaching and learning and pupils' progress are checked regularly by senior leaders. Areas for improvement are identified quickly and there is well-planned training and support for the continuing development of teachers' subject knowledge and skills.
- Good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is bringing about year-on-year improvements in the achievements of the youngest children.
- Pupils benefit from well-planned and interesting opportunities to develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills across a wide range of subjects. The topics and subjects in the school's curriculum are designed carefully to provide a rich learning experience and they have a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is enhanced further by experiences provided through clubs and during residential and non-residential visits. These clubs and visits support pupils to develop as learners and widen their understanding of the world. Pupils take part in elections for the school council. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school is working well towards full implementation of its preferred approach to assessment following the removal of National Curriculum levels.
- Pupil premium funds are used effectively to ensure that, wherever possible, disadvantaged pupils make good progress. Skilful use of the primary sport funding includes the employment of specialist coaches to deliver high-quality physical education, which is helping pupils to learn new skills and increase their understanding of living a healthy lifestyle. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the range of sports clubs available for them to attend.
- The school's views of its successes and areas for improvement are accurate and leaders know what remains to be done to improve the school further. Planning for improvement is detailed and contains the right priorities. The school's leaders are in a good position to make further improvements and the headteacher knows well what actions are needed to bring them about. She is able to draw on her experience as a local leader of education to bring new ideas and develop new practices.
- The local authority has provided effective support and challenge to leaders since the previous inspection, enabling the school to build capacity and become self-sufficient.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance of the school is good. Governors are knowledgeable and have high expectations for the school. They understand how the school performs against national standards and ask relevant questions about pupils' achievement and progress, especially the performance of disadvantaged pupils. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors carry out a range of visits, including with senior leaders and subject leaders, which help them to gain first-hand knowledge of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in the school. They have a clear overview of teachers' performance and how this is managed. They are familiar with the expectations of the *Teacher's Standards* and ensure that teachers' pay rises are dependent on pupils making good progress.

- The governing body ensures that all statutory responsibilities are met, including those relating to safeguarding and finance. It checks that the school is helping pupils to understand and accept that the beliefs and cultures of others may be different from their own. It has clear lines of responsibility and this ensures that all relevant policies and procedures are monitored and kept up to date, including those for safeguarding.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good, both in class and around the school. Relationships between pupils and with their teachers are very happy. Pupils commented that one of the best things about school is that 'We all get along. Everyone is friendly.' During breaks and lunchtime, including when eating, pupils conduct themselves sensibly.
- Pupils have a very positive attitude towards learning, which contributes to their good progress. They are keen to take part in activities and enjoy working cooperatively in small groups. Pupils in all year groups are able to discuss their work together sensibly, share resources and reach decisions amicably.
- All aspects of the school's work contribute well to pupils' understanding of different cultures and religions and foster a strong sense of respect for others. Pupils recognise the ideals and values of Britain today and are well prepared for their future in a multicultural society.
- Pupils are happy to come to school and their attendance is above average.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. All relevant policies and procedures for ensuring pupils' health, safety and well-being are in place.
- Through assemblies and the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, such as when walking to school, cycling, using the internet, and crossing roads.
- Pupils know that, if they have any concerns, they can approach an adult, who will help them sort out any difficulties they may be experiencing.
- Pupils are aware of the various forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Pupils and their parents say bullying is rare. They are confident that, should it occur, it will be dealt with quickly and appropriately. School records confirm this view.

## **The quality of teaching** is good

- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers, generally, have high expectations, both in terms of pupils' learning and their progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use questioning well to check pupils' prior knowledge and understanding and to extend their learning. Technology features well in lessons and electronic whiteboards keep pupils focused on their learning. Pupils have access to an interesting range of good-quality equipment to support their learning.
- Learning environments are consistently outstanding throughout the school. Vibrant displays of pupils' work and subject information provide excellent support and encouragement for reading and help pupils develop their mathematical and writing skills.
- Teachers plan interesting topics and pupils' writing reflects this. Inspectors observed good-quality writing about the Second World War, The Ancient Greeks, Rainforests, and Super Heroes.
- Pupils engage well with the tasks teachers set them. They are enthusiastic towards their learning and show obvious enjoyment in what they do. In lessons, teachers provide frequent opportunities for them to

share ideas and work in pairs or groups. This supports the development of the social skills, listening to and respecting each other's views.

- Reading is taught effectively. Tasks in guided reading sessions are planned well to develop pupils' reading skills. Teachers and teaching assistants promote pupils' knowledge and use of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) successfully. Pupils were observed using phonics very effectively in their reading and writing during the inspection.
- Mathematics skills are, generally, taught well and there are good opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge to solving problems.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and their feedback helps pupils to extend their learning. They make sure that pupils act upon the advice they are given in the feedback to improve their work.
- Teachers have good knowledge of the levels their pupils are working at. They plan work and homework tasks that are usually neither too easy nor too hard for pupils. However, sometimes, teachers leave the most-able pupils too long before they give them more-challenging work and this slows their progress. Also, books show that the most-able pupils are sometimes given work which is too easy for them, before they get on to the more-challenging work of which they are capable.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution overall, in particular when supporting individual pupils and particular groups. However, they are not always used consistently well throughout all parts of lessons. Sometimes at the start or end of lessons, especially when the teacher is talking, they do not support pupils' learning as well as they could.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start in the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. They make good progress in the Reception year and a much higher proportion than is seen nationally reach a good level of development by the end of the year.
- Children continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2 in 2013, standards were above the national average in reading, writing, and mathematics. In 2014, standards rose further still in all three subjects.
- In Key Stage 2, pupils at the end of Year 6 had made above-average progress in reading in 2013 from their starting points at the end of Key Stage 1. They made average progress in writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching expected levels in reading at the end of Key Stage 2 in that year was higher than is seen nationally. The proportions reaching expected levels in writing and mathematics in 2013 were broadly in line with those seen nationally.
- In 2014, pupils in Year 6 improved the progress they made in writing and mathematics and, overall, a higher proportion made more than the expected progress than did so the previous year. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 dipped slightly in 2014. However this was a small year group and overall performance data was unduly affected by a few pupils who joined the school part way through Key Stage 2. Pupils who had been at the school throughout Key Stage 2 made good or better progress from their starting points and achieved well.
- The progress and attainment of the most-able pupils is generally good. The proportions of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in reading, writing, and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 has risen and is now well above that seen nationally. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014, the proportions reaching the higher Level 5 are broadly in line with those seen nationally for reading and mathematics and well above average for writing.
- The school's assessment data show that pupils in all year groups made good progress during the last academic year. Scrutiny of work in these pupils' books supports this judgement. Inspectors' observations of lessons, scrutiny of the work of pupils currently in school, and the school's tracking data show that

pupils in all year groups continue to make good progress.

- In 2013, there was no difference between the attainment in writing of pupils supported through the pupil premium and their classmates and they were two terms ahead of their classmates in reading. In mathematics, they were about three terms behind their classmates. Compared with their peers nationally, these pupils were almost five terms ahead in reading, two terms ahead in writing, and a term behind in mathematics. In 2014, the gap for mathematics disappeared, both between these pupils and their classmates and with their peers nationally. This, amply, demonstrates the school's commitment to improving equality of opportunity.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. Their learning is managed and provided for well. Good use is made of external agencies, when required.

### **The early years provision** is good

- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. From typical starting points on entry to the Reception Year, children, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress. In 2013, the proportion of children who reached a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was above that seen nationally. In 2014, it rose further to be well above the national figure. Children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Very thorough procedures are used to check children's starting points when they join the school. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has developed productive relationships with staff in most local nurseries, which helps with planning and preparing for each new intake. This early understanding of children's specific learning needs ensures timely intervention for any children who may need extra support, for example with their communication skills.
- Adults use questioning well to extend children's learning. Their accurate observations help them to plan activities that help each child to build on what they know and can do. This enables children to move their learning on quickly.
- Children make a very good start in developing their physical and social skills, as well as their early reading, writing, and number skills because there is ample opportunity to practise and consolidate them, when learning both inside and outside. Resources are eye-catching and tempt children to experiment. For example, following a weighing activity, children enjoyed discovering which vegetables were heaviest and how this moved the scales.
- Parents and carers spoke highly of the staff and feel well informed about their children's progress through their 'learning journey' books. Parents are also encouraged to share their observations of their children's learning on a 'tree of achievement'. Children are safe at school because the adults are alert to welfare, health and safety issues and follow the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

## What inspection judgements mean

| School | Grade   | Judgement            | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------|---------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | Grade 1 | Outstanding          | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | Grade 2 | Good                 | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | Grade 4 | Inadequate           | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

## School details

|                                |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 120607       |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Lincolnshire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 441878       |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

|                                            |                                            |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                    |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary aided                            |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11                                       |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                      |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 192                                        |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                         |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Ian Scott                                  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Fiona Griffiths                            |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 24 January 2013                            |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01780 763654                               |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | No fax                                     |
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